



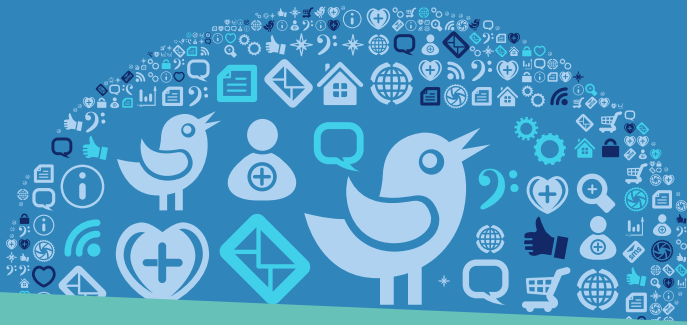
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# GETTING STARTED WITH TWITTER



**Irish Life**





# WHAT IS TWITTER?

Twitter was founded in 2006 as an SMS service. It soon moved to the web and it quickly became a popular social network.

There are over **319 million monthly active Twitter users worldwide** and it's the joint **second most popular network in Ireland after Facebook**.

Posts on Twitter are called tweets and can contain up to 140 characters (including spaces and punctuation). This length restriction harks back to its days as an SMS service. In 2006 the longest text message you could send was 160 characters and 20 of those characters were devoted to the username.

Twitter is unique because unlike Facebook or LinkedIn you can connect (follow) people directly, they don't need to approve you.

You can reply to and comment on any public tweet making it an easy place to connect with members of your target market and the people who influence them.

**It's these features that make it one of the most powerful networks available to business marketers.**

Unlike other social networks, there is no algorithm (although this may change). You see all tweets from your followers in reverse chronological order.

In this book, you'll learn how to set up a Twitter account, discover how to Tweet and learn about the language used.



# SETTING UP YOUR TWITTER ACCOUNT

To set up a Twitter account go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) and click the 'Sign Up For Twitter' button.

## *What you'll need*

- An email address or phone number that is not already associated with a Twitter account
- Have a Twitter username in mind. Usernames are unique so it's not always possible to get the one you want so have some options. Your username can be a maximum of 15 characters long with no spaces.

*Note: you can change your username at a later date.*



## COMPLETING YOUR PROFILE

Now you have signed up for an account it's time to customise your profile.

*The sections you need to complete are:*

1

### **A profile photograph (avatar)**

Recommended size 400x400 pixels

You have two options for your profile photograph.

#### **Photograph of you**

If you are going to be doing the tweeting it's always better to have a professional photograph of yourself here. People are more likely to interact and engage with a person than a brand. They'll feel more connected to your business if they can see the face behind the tweets.

#### **Your logo**

If you are a larger organisation or if more than one person will be tweeting from your account you should use your logo for your profile picture. This gives your account a more corporate look and you'll find it harder to get interaction but honesty is important on Twitter. A photograph of you implies it's you that is tweeting, a logo represents your organisation.

## 2

### A cover photo

Recommended size 1500 x 500 pixels

Your cover photo sits at the top of your Twitter account. New visitors will see it when they visit your profile. This is a great area to share something about your business. You could include a photograph of your staff, a collage of pictures of happy customers or you could use this space to advertise a product or service and include a call to action like a phone number, email address or a nod to the link in your bio or pinned tweet (more about this later).

Your cover photo should be eye-catching and memorable.

## 3

### A short bio

Maximum of 160 characters including spaces and punctuation

People will read your bio before they decide to follow you so you need to make it interesting. Tell them a little bit about your business, and what you will be tweeting about. Remember to let people know what's in it for them if they follow.

Including 'Keeping you up to date with the latest financial news' or 'Tweeting about finance and the local community' will be more attractive than just a business pitch.

Adding colour to your bio with emoji will also make your bio stand out.

## 4

### Location

This can be specific if you are based in a local town or broader if you wish

For example: if you service the entire country you can write 'Ireland' if you are a local business include the name of your town.



## 5

### Website link (optional)

This can be a direct link to your website or a link to a specific page you want to showcase.

## 6

### Choosing a name

20 characters max

On Twitter you are known by your Twitter username (starting with @) but your real name is also prominent. Just like when you select your Twitter avatar if you use your own name people are more likely to respond to your tweets and interact with your account.

The rule of thumb is that if you are using a personal profile picture use your real name, if you are using your company logo use your company name.

## 7

### Twitter username

15 characters max

You set your Twitter username when you set up your account. If you want to change it you can do this in the settings menu.

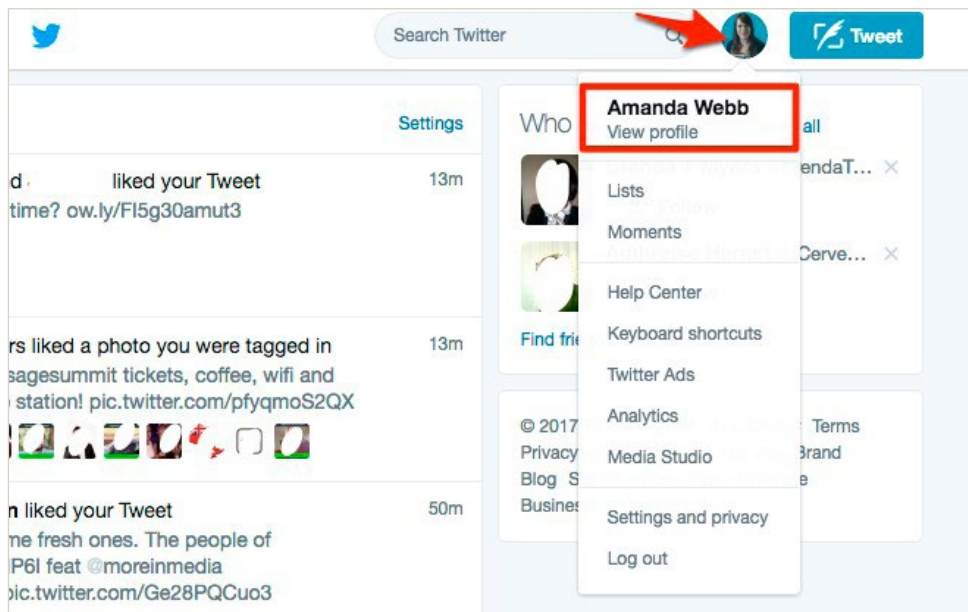




# HOW TO UPDATE YOUR PROFILE

To update your profile click the picture of you (an egg if you haven't added one) on the top right-hand side of your Twitter home screen.

Select 'View profile'





This brings you to your profile page. Click 'Edit profile' at the top right-hand side of the page.

The screenshot shows the Twitter profile of Amanda Webb (@Spiderworking). The header features a blue banner with the text "Welcome to the world". Below the banner, the profile statistics are displayed: TWEETS 34.7K, FOLLOWING 3,254, FOLLOWERS 5,608, LIKES 4,793, LISTS 36, and MOMENTS 2. The "Edit profile" button is located in the top right corner, highlighted by a red arrow. The profile bio reads: "Small business blogger, Digital Marketing Trainer, Speaker Podcaster & Vlogger. Also love cats, cake and Dr. Who. Download my blogging checklist below". A pinned tweet is visible, asking "Do you tweet? Are you wasting your time? Can Twitter deliver business results?". On the right, there is a section for "Your Tweet activity" showing a bar chart of impressions over the last 24 hours.

This screenshot shows the same Twitter profile page as before, but with the "Change your header photo" and "Change your profile photo" buttons highlighted by red arrows. The header photo is a blue banner with the text "Welcome to the world". The profile bio is the same. The pinned tweet is also visible. The "Change your header photo" button is located in the top right corner, and the "Change your profile photo" button is located in the top left corner. The "Cancel" and "Save changes" buttons are also visible in the top right corner.

Now you can edit each section of your profile.

This screenshot shows the same Twitter profile page as before, but with red arrows pointing to the sections that can be edited: "Real Name" (Amanda Webb), "Username" (@Spiderworking), "Bio" (Small business blogger, Digital Marketing Trainer, Speaker Podcaster & Vlogger. Also love cats, cake and Dr. Who. Download my blogging checklist below), "Location" (Ireland), and "Website link" (www.spiderworking.com/beforeyoupublis). The "Real Name" arrow points to the name at the top. The "Username" arrow points to the handle. The "Bio" arrow points to the bio text. The "Location" arrow points to the location field. The "Website link" arrow points to the website field.



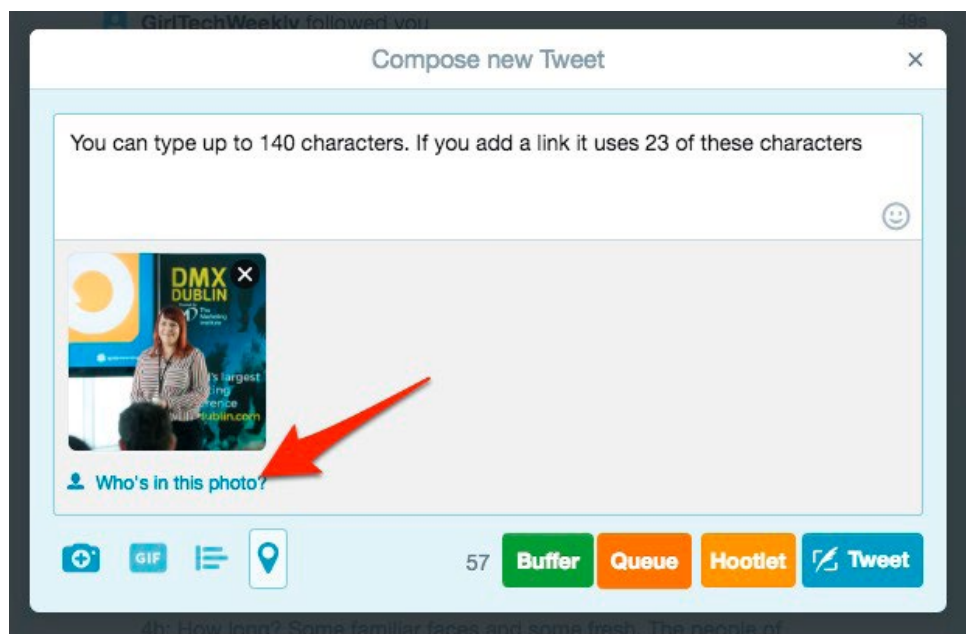
## ADDING RICH MEDIA

Twitter is no longer a text-only network. You can now easily add photos, videos and animated Gifs to your tweets without using up any of your 140 characters.

Click the camera icon below the tweet box to upload a photograph or video (up to 140 seconds long) from your computer. You can also record a video directly to your Twitter account.



When you upload a photograph you can tag people in the photograph (not included in your 140 characters). by clicking 'who's in this photo?'



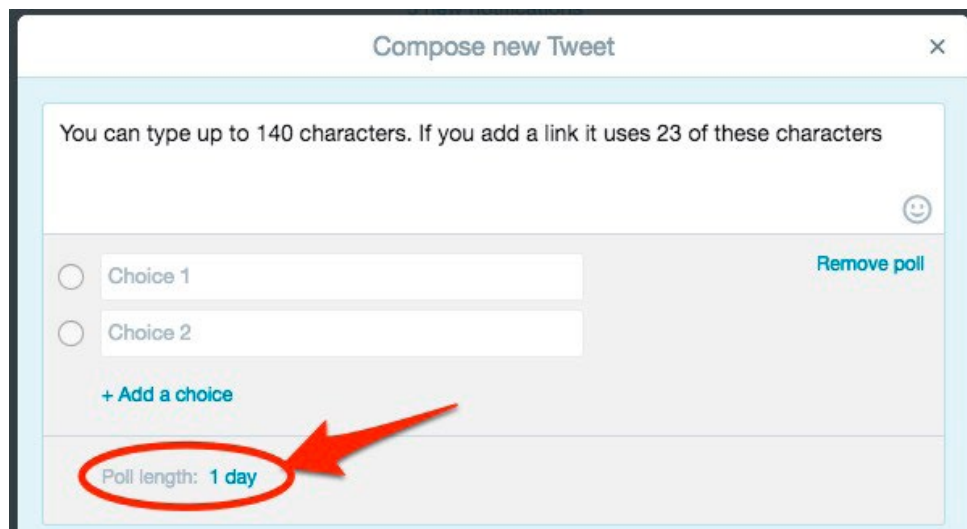
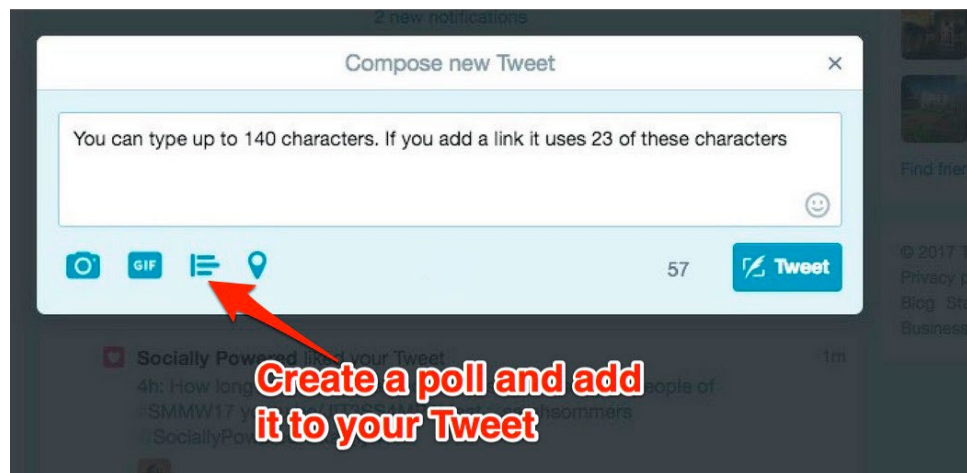
You can add up to 4 photographs to one tweet

Click 'Gif' to select from a library of animated Gifs that you can add to your Tweet. These are great for

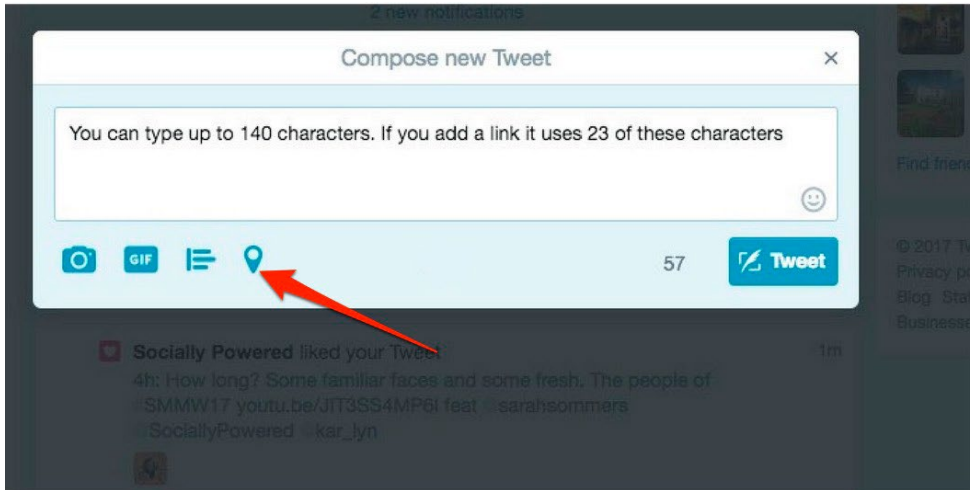
## POLLS

Running a poll is a good way to spark engagement on Twitter. You can add a poll to your tweet including up to 4 voting options by clicking the poll icon below your text.

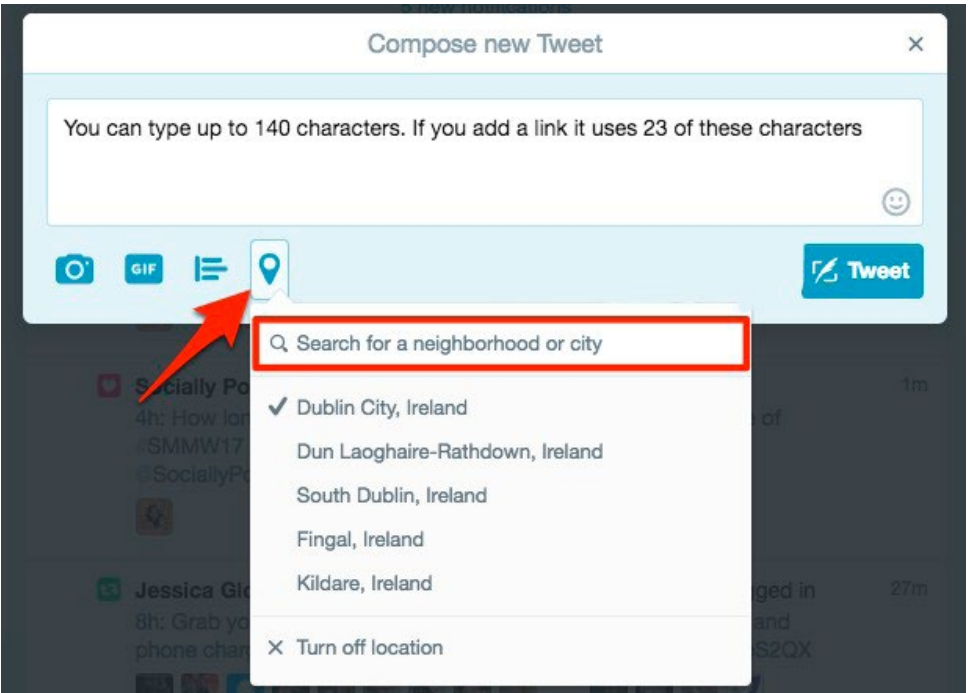
Now add your options and set a duration for the poll before you click Tweet. The maximum duration for a poll is 7 days.



If you want to appear in local searches or let people know where you are you can add a location to your Tweet. Click the location icon below your Tweet.



Twitter will try to automatically locate you but you can also search for your location to add it.



This is particularly useful if you want people to know that you are at a conference or at a new location.



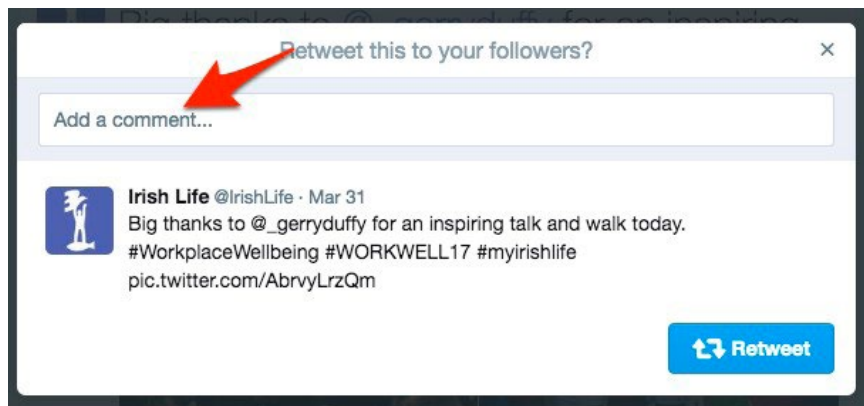
When you visit Twitter for the first time it's easy to get confused by some of the abbreviations used. It doesn't take long to decode tweets if you know the basics:

## RETWEET

A Retweet is similar to a Facebook share. When you click the Retweet button underneath a tweet it re-posts the tweet to your profile so that your followers will see it.



You have the option to add your own comment to a Retweet, use this to tell your followers why they might find this relevant or why you think they should look at it.

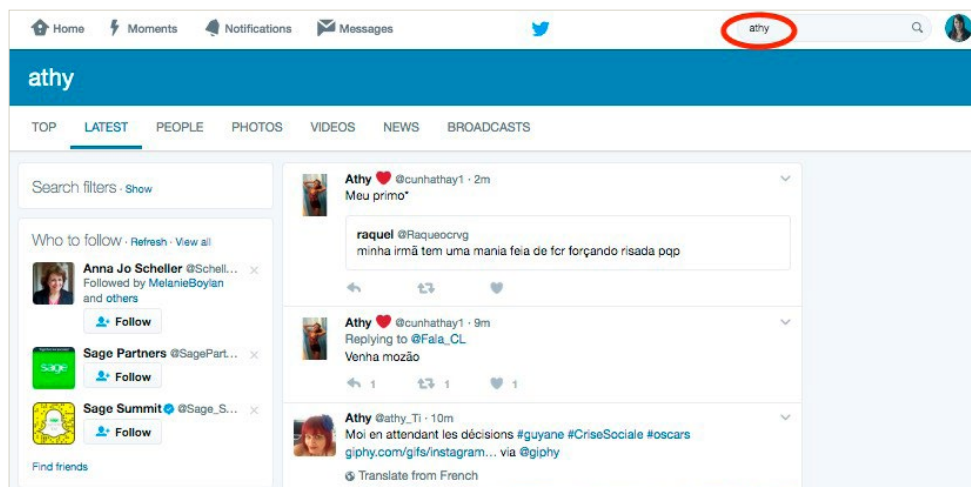


## HASHTAGS

Hashtags are a way of indexing tweets so you know what they are about.

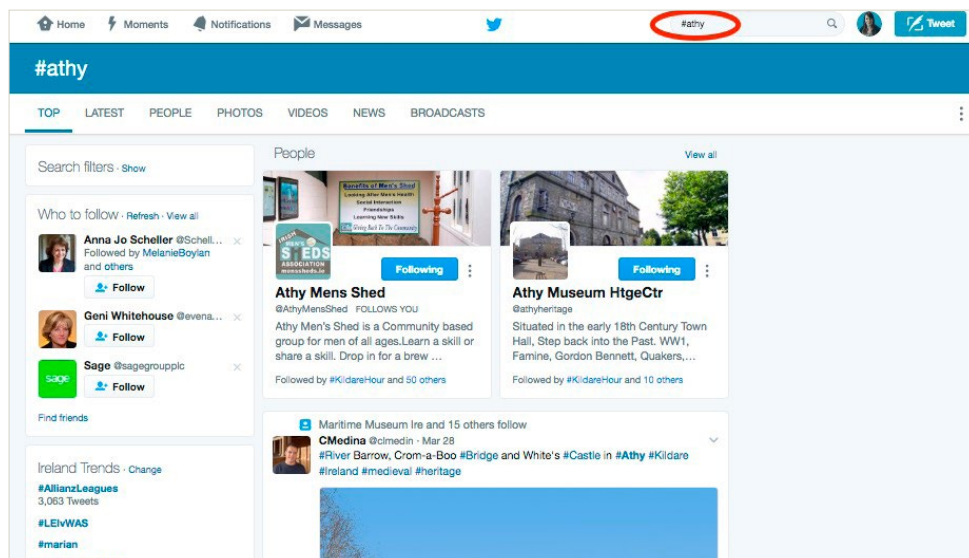
For example, I live in the town of Athy in Co. Kildare. Athy is also a girls name in some parts of the world.

When I search for 'Athy' on Twitter I get results that include mentions of the town but I also get mentions of people called Athy.



When people tweet about the town of Athy they often use the hashtag #town to signify their tweet is about the town.

When I search for #Athy I only get tweets about the town, not about the people who share its name.



Use hashtags when you want to be specific about what you are tweeting about. Using the name of your town is useful when you are tweeting about local events. If you are talking about local businesses or local retailers you could use the tag #shoplocal.

Although there are people on Twitter using the tag #lifeinsurance it's unlikely to attract many search results. You should be looking for tags that will be of interest to Twitter users.

You can also make up your own tags for campaigns you run. See the #MyIrishLife below.

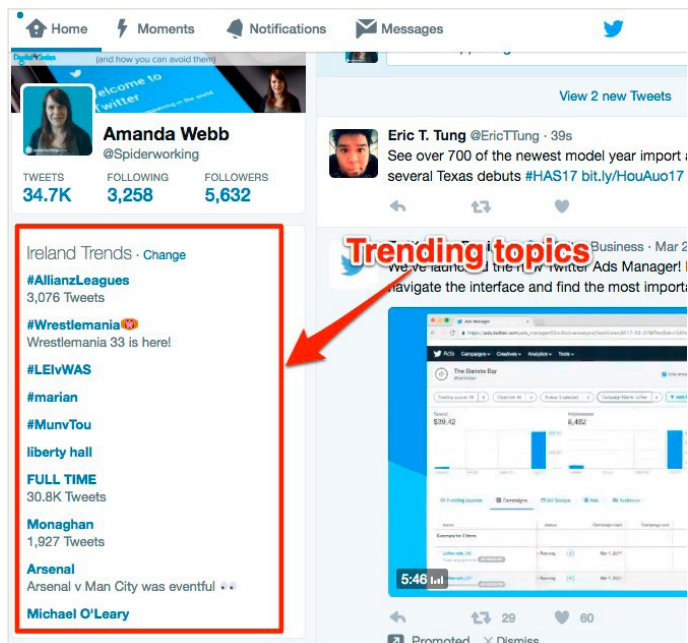


If you want to create your own tag search for it first to ensure no one else is using it. If it's not being used add it to your tweets related to the campaign.



## NEWSWORTHY TAGS

Hashtags can also be used when commenting on newsworthy events. Keep an eye on trending topics on the left hand sidebar.



This will show you popular hashtags in real time. If any are related to your business you can jump in and join in by adding the tag to your tweets.

Watch out for tweets related to television shows in your newsfeed too. Is there a topic on Vincent Brown that is related to you or your customers? You can join the discussion by using the tag #VinB

## EVENT TAGS

Conferences, festivals and events often have specific hashtags. Look at their websites before you attend to find the suggested tag.

Use this tag when you are at the event so others can find you and connect with you.

LIKE

Underneath each tweet you'll see a heart shape. This represents a 'Like'. Use this to let people know you have seen their tweet or that you agree with their tweet.

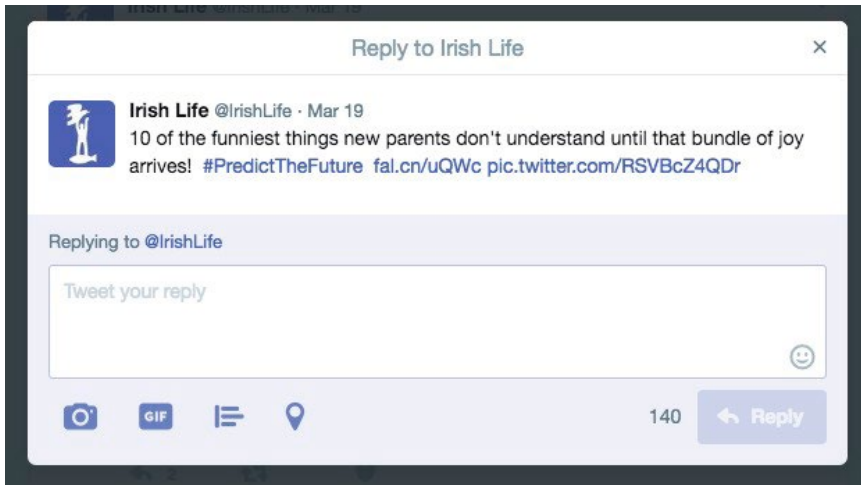


REPLY

Click the arrow underneath a tweet to reply to it.



This will open up a new tweet displaying the Twitter username of the person you are responding to above the box.



Type your tweet into the box and click 'Reply' button to send the tweet.



## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Set up your Twitter account
- Send a tweet
- Retweet someone on Twitter
- Like a tweet
- Reply to someone on Twitter

In the next book we'll look at how you can find people to follow on Twitter





# Irish Life

Irish Life Assurance plc is regulated  
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ILA 13377 (NPI 08-17)